

New locations added to pharmaceutical drug collection

PAINESVILLE - Due to the success of the Lake County Pharmaceutical Drug Collection and Disposal Program, Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) has added two new locations - the Eastlake Police Department and Willoughby Police Department. Lake County residents now have a choice of seven locations to choose from to take their unwanted and expired prescription and non-prescription medications seven days a week: Lake County Sheriff's Office, Mentor Police Department, Willoughby Hills Police Department, Madison Township

Police Department, Willoughby Police Department, Eastlake Police Department and Lakeland Community College Police Department.

Each of these law enforcement departments have a collection bin in the reception area where Lake County residents can bring their unwanted and expired prescription and over-the-counter medications, including cold and flu medications, cough syrups, pain relievers, vitamins, creams, pills and pet medications. Residents should remove or black out the personal information on

pharmacy labels and leave the medications in the original package or container. Residents should be advised that no needles or syringes are permitted in these bins.

The disposal hours for all the locations are Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. There are no Sunday hours at Lakeland Community College Police Department.

The collection and disposal program was launched in Lake County in December 2010. Since that time over 2,000 pounds of pharmaceutical waste has been collected

and incinerated. This program enables Lake County residents to use the collection bins for environmental concerns and public safety. Prescription and non-prescription medications are being found in rivers, streams and ground water. They are considered to be "emerging contaminants of concern" to waters, partly due to harmful effects that their current low concentrations are already having on the fish population. Existing wastewater treatment plants and septic systems are not designed to remove these contaminants. Residents are helping to re-

duce the amount of these contaminants in the environment by using the collection bins instead of flushing unwanted drugs down the toilet or putting them in the trash.

Lake County Narcotics Agency is supporting the law enforcement departments by serving as the central collection and storage facility and handles the transport and destruction of the collected medications. For more information on the Lake County Pharmaceutical Drug Collection and Disposal Program, contact Laura Kuns at (440) 350-2543 or visit LCGHD's website at www.lcghd.org.